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25 February 1963

COMPARISON OF STATEMENTS ON CUBA:

The President's press conference, 7 February 1963

The President's press conference, 14 February 1963

The Director's public statement, 6 February 1963

The Director's testimony to the Mahon subcommittee, 4-5 February 1963

The Director's testimony to the Stennis subcommittee, 6-7 February 1963

Secretary McNamara's testimony to the Mahon subcommittee, 6-7 February 1963

Secretary McNamara's television briefing, 6 February 1963

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I. LESSENING OF THE THREAT

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "Cuba is a lessening military threat to the extent that the military personnel of the Soviet Union and their equipment are being removed. As you point out, 5,000 Soviet military personnel have moved out in the last eight or nine weeks and there appears to be some continuing movement out." (p. 50)

(Mahon; first day) "There is some indication that some of the equipment of some of these battalions has been or is being moved out of Cuba. Whether the movement of equipment will continue and whether it will be complemented by a movement out of Soviet personnel in the near future, I cannot say. Nor can I say how long the remaining Soviet personnel, primarily advisers and technicians, other than the combat force personnel, will remain in Cuba.

I do not believe they represent a threat to this nation as the word is normally used." (p. 27)

Mr. McCone

(Public Statement)

/After withdrawal of the offensive missiles and bombers. There remain large quantities of Soviet tanks, guns, aircraft, and troops, most of which arrived before the quarantine. A relatively small amount of Soviet military equipment has reached Cuba in the period since the quarantine." (pp. 7-8)

(Mahon; second day; Helms speaking) "Question: I assume you have no information to indicate the Soviet Union is making plans to evacuate Cuba? Answer: We find no evidence of this, Mr. Chairman." (p. 278)

(Stennis; first day) "I do not dismiss in the least the possibility of a new missile appearing, and it is a matter of great concern, and that is why I cannot explain this complex of surface-to-air missiles as being, remaining, in the hands of the Soviets. I cannot understand why there are 17,000 people there, or why there are

President Kennedy

(7 Feb Press Conf) "There has been, since the removal of the offensive weapons, a reduction of 4,500 people, we estimate. So to that degree the threat has diminished. And, of course, it is substantially different from the kind of threat we faced in October when there were offensive missiles and planes present."

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Secretary McNamara

(Mahon; second day) "I think all of us must watch with care the developments in the Hemisphere not primarily because of the introduction of Soviet personnel and equipment in Cuba, which I do not believe today is a threat to this nation, but rather because there exists in the Hemisphere a very fertile ground for the social and political unrest on which communism breeds." (p. 136)

Mr. McCone

four army units, nor can I understand why there has been a continual improvement in their communications not only on the island but with Moscow...." (p. 48)

"We have no discernible and appreciable build-up since the time of the quarantine.... I think they are replacing equipment and spare parts and rotating people, but they are maintaining a very substantial installation and complement of military personnel." (p. 66)

President Kennedy

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2. REMOVAL OF FROGS

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "Recently, our reconnaissance has revealed that certain equipment of these Soviet combat forces, namely that associated with the tactical rocket units, has also started to be moved out of the island back to Soviet Union." (p. 36; see also Mr. Hughes, p. 34)

Mr. McCone

(Public Statement) "In addition, there are several advanced-type tactical rocket launchers...." (p. 6)

(Mahon; second day) /Presented chart showing continued presence of 24-32 FROGS./

(Stennis; first day) "The FROG rockets, there were 24 to 32, and still the same amount /at present/." (p. 55)

(Stennis; second day) "Some six weeks ago, we noted that 10 or 12 FROG missile launchers were on the dock at Mariel, I believe, and presumably were loaded on a ship. We continued to carry the number of missiles, of FROG missiles, and launchers, in Cuba that I mentioned yesterday, which the range is 24 to 32." (p. 93)

"We have not detected any withdrawal since that time /The missiles and bombers/. We consider...we cannot explain the withdrawal of the

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Secretary McNamara

Mr. McCone

President Kennedy

few FROG launchers, whether they were defective or whether they were in excess of the unit requirements, we have no way of evaluating. But we have not seen the others withdrawn." (p. 100)

Note: This one is messy. The objects photographed were FROG missile transporters, not launchers. It cannot be proved that they had missiles on them and one school holds they were at dockside to pick up missiles. We (CIA) think they were taken out; we don't know why. DIA does not believe they were withdrawn and also holds 24-32. No change has been noted in the number present at the armored group camps. We think Mr. McNamara is basing his "lessening" case on a very slender reed.

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3. SUBVERSION IN LATIN AMERICA

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "I have no evidence that Cuba is being used as a base for subversion directed against other Latin American countries." (p. 47)

(Mahon; first day) Mr. Ford: "Do we know whether or not Soviet agents are being trained in Cuba today for export in the Caribbean area?"

Secretary McNamara: "Following Mr. Sheppard's advice, I think it would be better if I did not comment on this and allowed Mr. McCone to discuss it with you." (p. 115)

(Mahon; second day) "I do not believe it /Cuba/ is being used as a base for the export of communism to any substantial degree today, and certainly not in any effective way today." (p. 174)

"I have no indication agents carrying out sabotage in Venezuela came from Cuba. I am not aware there is any such evidence available in the government." (p. 175)

Mr. McCone

(Stennis; first day) "The most significant change in the Cuban policy, the most significant discernible change in the Cuban policy, since the missile crisis has been greatly increased subversion in other Latin American countries. This has been an element in Castro's program. Indications are multiplying that it is a new and high priority Cuban objective." (p. 57)

"There is no question about the fact that this is the bridgehead of communism into all of Latin America."

"Q. If we don't get them /the Soviets/ out of Cuba the chances are excellent that we will lose Central and South America.

A. "It will erode away quite rapidly, in my opinion." (p. 64)

President Kennedy

(14 Feb press conf) "I think the part of the report /From the OAS' special security committee/ which is most significant is the emphasis they put on subversion in the continent, the movement of men and perhaps money against the constituted governments. That is a matter which the United States Government is giving its greatest attention to this winter, the question of the lessening not only of the subversion that may come from Cuba but from other parts of the hemisphere."

"I think there were 1,200 students from Latin America that went into Cuba last year. I am sure a good many of them were politically indoctrinated; some of them were obviously given training in more direct forms of political action. I don't think we should regard, however, the Communist threat as primarily based on Cuba, the Communist threat to the hemisphere."

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4. SHIPMENT OF ARMS

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "There are no amphibious capabilities or no capabilities in Cuba such that they could move any of this equipment to any other part of the hemisphere...."

"They have no equipment for making such shipments." (p. 38)

(Mahon; second day) Mr. Minshall: "I have an article right here in last night's Star. The headlines are: "Cuba Reported Sending Arms to British Guiana."

Secretary McNamara: "I have no evidence they have. I would be happy to have the evidence they have." (p. 175)

Mr. McCone

(Stennis; second day) "They do not have the resources for /The support of a mass military operation/."

"Question: ...if they put these tanks--offensive, defensive weapons, relative talk--tanks on a freighter to this fellow /Jagan/ ...if anybody really wants to take over these tanks and troops would be priceless, would they not?"

"Answer: Oh, yes, they could ship arms. However...we haven't found a single instance where appreciable quantities of arms have been exported into any Latin American country." (pp. 113-114)

President Kennedy

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5. SIZE OF FORCES

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "I think it is clear that much Soviet equipment has been moved into Cuba, but I think also we should put in perspective the quantities. I have mentioned to you and showed you pictures today of the Soviet ground force equipment. It is the type of equipment that is associated with four reinforced battalions. That is a very, very small force. It is not an offensive force in any normal sense of the word 'offensive.'" (p. 41)

"The remaining Soviet presence in Cuba...is limited to four combat forces, roughly each the size of a reinforced battalion, plus such other technical and advisory personnel as are associated with the air defense units and the training of Cubans in the use of the patrol craft and coastal defense equipment furnished to them." (p. 51) This repeated almost verbatim to Mahon committee.

Mr. McCone

(Public Statement) "The intelligence community of the United States Government continues to keep under close surveillance and to report currently on this extraordinary deployment of sizeable Soviet military forces into the Western Hemisphere." (p. 8)

President Kennedy

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6. PRESENCE OF OFFENSIVE WEAPONS

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "Q. Mr. Secretary, to pull all of this together, can you then say that you are personally convinced that there is absolutely not one single offensive system in Cuba, of any kind, any place, anywhere?"

A. "I think that is quite a certification. I don't believe it would be wise to use your exact words. But I do want to leave no doubt in your minds. I am satisfied that there are no offensive weapons systems in Cuba, and I am satisfied of this beyond any reasonable doubt." (p. 45)

(Mahon; first day) "In recent days questions have been raised in the press and elsewhere regarding offensive weapons in Cuba. I believe beyond any reasonable doubt that all such weapons have been removed from the island and that none have been reintroduced." (p. 4)

Mr. McCone

(Public Statement) "So far the findings /on the continuing presence of offensive weapons and bombers/ have been negative. Absolute assurance on these matters however could only come from continuing, penetrating on-site inspection." (p. 3)

(Stennis; first day) "We go on to state that we cannot say with absolute certainty that all of the missiles are out of Cuba. We believe that they are out and it is our considered judgment that they are, but absolute assurance on these matters, however, could only come from continuing penetrating on-site inspection." (p. 15)

President Kennedy

(7 Feb press conf) "But there has not been an addition since the removal of the weapons, and there has been the subtraction of that number of personnel."

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7. CONCEALMENT IN CAVES

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "I am satisfied that there are no major elements of offensive weapons systems in the caves in Cuba. I believe that the photography which we have carried out...of all Soviet ships moving into Cuban waters, and of the equipment which has been unloaded from those ships, makes it unlikely beyond any reasonable doubt that offensive weapons system equipment could not have been unloaded and moved into caves without our detection." (p. 45) /Mr. McNamara did not mention on-site inspection in this context.7

Mr. McCone

(Public Statement)  
"...there have been a number of reports that offensive weapons have been concealed in caves. ...all statements alleging the presence of offensive weapons are meticulously checked. So far the findings have been negative. Absolute assurance on these matters, however, could only come from continuing, penetrating on-site inspection." (p. 3)

President Kennedy

(7 Feb press conf) "It may be that there are hidden away some missiles. Nobody can prove, in the finite sense, that they are not there, or they might be brought in."

"We cannot prove that there is not a missile in a cave or that the Soviet Union isn't going to ship next week. We prepare for that. But we will find them when they do...."

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8. NUMBER OF MRBM'S

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "We have a record of the number of missiles observed in Cuba, and we have recorded that exact number moving onto ships and on the ships moving into the home waters of the Soviet Union." (p. 44)

"As you know, we covered the entire island of Cuba with fine-resolution photography--located 42 missiles and their associated equipment...accounted for all the equipment and all the missiles leaving Cuba..." (p. 46)

(Mahon; second day) Mr. Ostertag: "You have no fear that there might possibly be a grain of truth in the fact that there are more (missiles) in there than actually we knew?"

Secretary McNamara: "I believe there is no truth whatsoever in those claims."

Mr. McCone

(Stennis; first day) "We had seen 33 missiles in various locations. We actually saw 42 of them go out. We had estimated at that time that there might be 48 on the island." (p. 35)

(Public Statement) "Photography...proves our satisfaction the withdrawal of 42 medium-range missiles...." (p. 3)

President Kennedy

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9. NUCLEAR WARHEADS

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "Our aerial reconnaissance has permitted us to verify that... remove all of the missiles and key system components from the island...." (p. 32)

"The movement of nuclear warheads into Cuba I believe occurred. I believe we observed it in certain vehicles, and we observed the movement of those vehicles out of Cuba." (p. 43)

Mr. McCone

(To Stennis; first day) "We have not seen nuclear warheads. We are satisfied nuclear warheads were there for the medium-range missiles. We did not see them.

"We identified carriers and transports, because of their unusual characteristics and the way they were guarded, we were convinced they were nuclear warhead transporters. But we did not actually see a nuclear warhead in being on a missile.

"...I have no proof from our intelligence resources or our photography that they were either there or they were not there.

"I am satisfied, however, that they would not have brought the complex of missiles into the state of readiness as rapidly as they did on the urgent basis without having the warhead immediately at hand. Now, I can't conceive of them having left the

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Secretary McNamara

Mr. McCone

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warheads there after withdrawing  
the missiles." (pp. 29-32)

(To Stennis; second day)  
"...we have not seen the warheads  
come in, we have not seen them  
there nor have we seen them leave,  
but we have seen these special ve-  
hicles which we think are warhead  
transporters." (p. 103)

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10. OFFENSIVE VS. DEFENSIVE

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "It is very difficult to draw the precise line between an offensive weapon and a defensive weapon. I think under the circumstances most of you would agree that the medium-range ballistic missiles and the intermediate-range ballistic missiles are offensive weapons. I think most would agree that rifles, under circumstances in which they exist in Cuba, are probably defensive weapons.

"The other weapons of the types we described appear to us to be properly described as defensive in the environment in which they are deployed in Cuba. (p. 41)

"At the present time, as we reported to you, we see nothing but defensive arms on the Island of Cuba." (p. 47)

(Mahon; second day) "I think that the categorization of a particular weapon as either

Mr. McCone

(Stennis; first day) "And while a great many spokesmen draw a very fine sharp line between offensive and defensive installations, I am not inclined to draw that sharp a line."

"Well, all of the equipment that we observed is of a character the fundamental purpose of which is defensive. However, I did not dismiss its use for other purposes." (p. 44)

"The offensive capability of anything that we know is in Cuba at the present time is limited. If any of the aircraft or other items, if an attempt were made to use them for offensive purposes, it would be limited in its radius of active operation, but nevertheless it could be used as such." (p. 45)

President Kennedy

(7 Feb press conf) "Q - Mr. President, do you feel that it is possible that the defensive weapons now going into Cuba, or there now, could be used for offensive purposes? For example, could not a defensive missile be used or launched from a PT boat or some other vessel? If you do find this to be true, do you feel that any action would be required?

THE PRESIDENT: "The range of the missiles on the Komar, the 12 Komars, I think, is, I believe, 18 miles. So we could not regard that as a weapon which would be used in an attack on the United States. If there is going to be that kind of attack on the United States, then you would have an attack from places other than Cuba, and much larger weapons than a Komar torpedo boat can carry."

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Secretary McNamara

Mr. McCone

President Kennedy

offensive or defensive must be made in the light of the circumstances surrounding its deployment. I do not think any of us would disagree with the classification of the IRBM and MRBM systems deployed in Cuba by the Soviets during October as offensive. It seemed clear that they had the capability of striking outside of Cuba against other nations in the Hemisphere. That seems quite clear.

I think it is equally clear that the weapons currently in Cuba are defensive in character in the sense that they do not have the capability to strike against nations elsewhere in the Hemisphere." (p. 131)

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11. SUBMARINE BASES

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "No, and I think perhaps what you have in mind is that there are recurring rumors that the Soviets have established submarine bases on the shores of Cuba, bases which might presumably be used for submarines carrying missiles. We have no evidence whatsoever that such bases have been established. As a matter of fact, we have positive evidence that they have not been." (p. 44)

Mr. McCone

(Stennis; first day) "We know of no submarines in the vicinity of Cuba at the present time. In October there were four submarines that we had under surveillance that were west of the Azores, and a mother ship in the vicinity of the Azores which we likewise had under surveillance.

"They are building a harbor under the cover of a fishing trawler harbor. I have no doubt but what they will install in Cuba facilities for the maintenance of submarines.

"The Soviet nuclear submarine fleet and its missile-launching fleet is growing, as you know, and it would be very convenient for them to have a place to operate out of." (pp. 60-61)

President Kennedy

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Secretary McNamara

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Mr. McCone

President Kennedy



"These are very ominous  
and important developments,  
in my opinion." (pp. 52-  
53)

12. CAPABILITIES OF MIG-21

Secretary McNamara

(TV) "Those aircraft /MIG-21s/ do not have a nuclear bombing capability under normal circumstances and they are not configured for such missions at the present time.

"Moreover, our air defenses are such that were they to be configured for bombing missions, carrying the maximum bomb load that they would be capable of, their range would be very, very low and their radius of action under the probable tactics that they would use, on the order of 100 nautical miles." (p. 39)

(Mahon; second day) "Were they /MIG-21s/ to be configured for it /a bomb/, they could carry a thousand-pound bomb, and using the tactics they would have to use to attempt to penetrate our defenses, they would have a radius of approximately 100 miles." (p.132)

Mr. McCone

(Stennis; first day) "The MIG-21 is a high speed MACH 2 aircraft which can be used for both ground support and air defense. Its armament includes infrared, homing, air-to-air missiles. It has a combat radius of about 350 nautical miles.

"The MIG-21 aircraft is probably capable of carrying nuclear weapons. However, this fighter which has been observed in flight for several years has never been seen practicing as a nuclear weapons carrier either in Cuba or Eastern Europe.

"If a nuclear weapon was attached to this aircraft, its radius of action would be restricted to about 200 nautical miles, and then only under visual flight conditions...." (p. 27)

(Mahon; first day) "The MIG-21, as we know it, is an interceptor aircraft. It has the capability

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Mr. McCone

President Kennedy

to carry a bomb. It would have to be modified to carry the bomb, probably externally, as do some of our own fighter bombers. I do not think we have information available as to how large a weapon it could carry, but it would be substantial.' (p. 145)

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ADDITIONAL POINTS IN SECRETARY MCNAMARA'S TV PRESENTATION (6 FEB)

AND IN MAHON COMMITTEE TESTIMONY (6-7 FEB)

NOT DIRECTLY DISCUSSED BY MR. MCCONE

TV - Page 1. Implication that all reconnaissance flights since 1 July flown by US military aircraft. This implication also in Mahon testimony. (first day, p. 6)

TV - Page 8. Flat statement that the Navy had photographed all ships during August-October. This is not true. This stated only by implication in Mahon testimony. (first day, p. 7)

TV - Page 18. Statement that 16 ships turned around, against DCI's 15. This is bookkeeping, not a significant difference.

TV - Page 22. The IL-28 crate story is distorted. The photographs were not received in Washington until 9 or 10 October. CIA knew from previous experience in Egypt, etc., that these crates did in fact contain IL-28s; DIA had to be convinced. The information was published in the Bulletin of 11 October. See also statement on p. 45, in which arrival of IL-28s is moved up to early September and time required to recognize them further stretched out.

TV - Page 27. Note publicizing of US estimate of the characteristics of the SA-2 and MIG-21 systems. Also the specific statement that "the first evidence" of SA-2s came from photography of 29 August.

TV - Page 28. Statement of our ability to enlarge "several hundred times."

TV - Page 40. The statement that these flights took place between 5 September and 14 October, as worded, draws attention to the critical period without answering the question. The actual dates were 5, 26, and 29 September, and 5 and 7 October. Question is answered same way in Mahon (second day, p. 160), but dates are corrected to actual ones.

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TV - Page 40. Note the statement on the "risk of degrading our intelligence capability." In Mahon (second day, p. 140) stated "it seemed wise to expose more to the public in relation to the effect on our intelligence collection program this would normally be the case."

Mahon, Pages 39-41. Gives a lengthy discussion of Cuba as a "closed society" and the consequent difficulties of collecting intelligence through human agent penetration.

Mahon, Pages 83-85. Discusses air support for Bay of Pigs operation and states, "There were no air strikes by United States forces planned or contemplated or considered at any time."